

CASE MANAGEMENT/ELECTRONIC CASE FILES (CM/ECF) FACT SHEET

NOVEMBER 2002

The federal judiciary is now well underway with the nationwide implementation of its new Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) systems. CM/ECF not only replaces the courts' aging electronic docketing and case management systems, but also provides courts the option to have case file documents in electronic format, and to accept filings over the Internet.

CM/ECF systems are now in use in ten district courts, forty bankruptcy courts, and the Court of International Trade. Most of these courts are accepting electronic filings. More than 3 million cases with more than 14 million documents are on CM/ECF systems. And more than 20,000 attorneys and others have filed documents over the Internet. Under current plans, the number of CM/ECF courts will increase steadily each month into 2005. Each court goes through an implementation process that takes about 10 months.

Attorneys practicing in courts offering the electronic filing capability are able to file documents directly with the court over the Internet. The CM/ECF system uses standard computer hardware, an Internet connection and a browser, and accepts documents in Portable Document Format (PDF). The system is easy to use – filers prepare a document using conventional word processing software, then save it as a PDF file. After logging onto the court's web site with a court-issued password, the filer enters basic information relating to the case and document being filed, attaches the document, and submits it to the court. A notice verifying court receipt of the filing is generated automatically. Other parties in the case then automatically receive e-mail notification of the filing.

CM/ECF also provides courts the ability to make their documents available to the public over the Internet. The Judicial Conference has adopted a set of recommendations relating to privacy and public access to electronic case files. As part of the process to develop these recommendations, public comment was sought on a number of possible approaches. The Judicial Conference's Committee on Court Administration and Case Management is overseeing implementation of the recommendations.

There are no added fees for filing documents over the Internet using CM/ECF; existing document filing fees do apply. Electronic access to court data is available through the Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) program. Litigants receive one free copy of documents filed electronically in their cases, which they can save or print for their files. Additional copies are available to attorneys and the general public for viewing or downloading at seven cents per page, with a maximum cost per document of \$2.10. Directed by Congress to fund electronic access through user fees, the judiciary has set the fee at the lowest possible level sufficient to recoup program costs.

The national roll-out of the CM/ECF system for bankruptcy courts started in early 2001, and is scheduled to take two to three years. The CM/ECF system for district courts began to roll out nationally in May 2002. Implementation of the CM/ECF system for appellate courts is currently scheduled to begin in late 2004.

For more information, please contact: Karen Redmond, Office of Public Affairs (202) 502-2600

Relevant websites:

<http://www.uscourts.gov/cmecf/cmecf.html>

<http://www.privacy.uscourts.gov/>

Courts Currently Operational on CM/ECF

** Courts Accepting Electronic Filing*

District Courts

California Northern*
District of Columbia*
Indiana Southern*
Michigan Western*
Missouri Western*
Nebraska*
New York Eastern*
Ohio Northern*
Oregon*
Pennsylvania Eastern*

Court of International Trade

Bankruptcy Courts

Alabama Middle*
Alabama Southern*
Alaska*
Arizona*
Arkansas*
California Southern*
Colorado
Delaware*
Georgia Northern*
Illinois Southern*
Indiana Northern*
Iowa Northern*
Kentucky Eastern*
Kentucky Western*
Louisiana Eastern*
Louisiana Middle*
Louisiana Western*
Maine*
Missouri Western*
Montana

Nebraska*
Nevada
New Hampshire*
New Jersey*
New York Eastern*
New York Southern*
North Carolina Western*
Ohio Northern
Pennsylvania Eastern
Pennsylvania Western
South Dakota*
Texas Eastern*
Texas Southern*
Texas Western*
Utah
Vermont*
Virginia Eastern*
Washington Western*
Wisconsin Western*
Wyoming

Courts Currently in the Process of Implementing CM/ECF

District Courts

Alabama Southern
California Central
Connecticut
Illinois Northern
Iowa Northern
Kansas
Kentucky Eastern
Kentucky Western
Massachusetts
Maryland
Maine
Missouri Eastern
New York Southern
New York Western
Ohio Southern
Oklahoma Western
Pennsylvania Middle
South Dakota
Texas Eastern
Texas Northern
Texas Southern
Washington Western
Wisconsin Eastern
Wyoming

Court of Federal Claims

Bankruptcy Courts

Alabama Northern
California Northern
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Florida Middle
Florida Northern
Georgia Middle
Hawaii
Illinois Northern
Iowa Southern
Kansas
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan Western
Mississippi Northern
Missouri Eastern
New Mexico
New York Northern
New York Western
North Carolina Eastern
North Carolina Middle
Ohio Southern
Oklahoma Eastern
Oregon
Pennsylvania Middle

Rhode Island
South Carolina
Tennessee Eastern
Tennessee Middle
Tennessee Western
Texas Northern
West Virginia Northern
West Virginia Southern
Wisconsin Eastern
Virginia Western